GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:844
ANSWERED ON:04.03.2008
IMPORT OF SODA ASH
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Soda Ash is being imported due to reduction in import duty;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the government to increase the domestic production of Soda Ash and protect the domestic manufacturers of Soda Ash in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (c) Import of soda ash is free subject to payment of applicable customs duty. The total import of soda ash in the country in last three years is as follows:

Quantity in M.Ts.

2004-05	1,87,501.83
2005-06	6,52,756.32
2006-07	2,60,386.37
April-June 2006	76,759.00
April-June 2007	51,922.00

The basic customs duty on import of soda ash classifiable under Tariff Item 28362090 was reduced from 12.5% to 7.5% in the year 2007-08.
The manufacture of soda ash is de-licensed and 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is permitted in the industry. There are 6 manufacturers of soda ash in the country with a total installed capacity of 26,51,000 MT as on March, 2007. The domestic production of soda ash in the year 2006-07 was 20,78,057 MT.